



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Vale District Office
100 Oregon Street
Vale, Oregon 97918
<http://www.or.blm.gov/Vale/>



IN REPLY REFER TO:

4180 (OR034)

DEC 1 0 2004

Dear Interested Publics:

The Malheur Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed allotment evaluations and determinations on 19 grazing allotments within the North Fork Malheur River Geographical Management Area as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Allotment Evaluations and Determinations

Name of Allotment	Allotment Number
Agency Mountain	00161
Allotment #6	10204
Beulah	10217
Bridge Creek	00109
Butte Tree	10212
Calf Creek	00162
Castle Rock	10211
Chukar Park	00225
Cottonwood Creek	00226
DeArmond Murphy	10206
Ironside Mountain East	00114
Ironside Mountain West	00112
Kivett	00133
Lockhart Mountain	00224
Malheur River	10219
Ring Butte	10208
South Willow Creek	00153
Squaw Butte	00233
Whitley Canyon	10216

The allotment evaluation and determination describes the status of the current management of these allotments in regards to meeting or not meeting the Standards for Rangeland Health and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management (Standards) as established by the Southeast Oregon Resource Advisory Council in 1997. These documents summarize the rangeland health assessments and evaluation and presents recommendations to address the assessment findings. We would appreciate your review and comment. Detailed results of the field evaluations are retained in the allotment files in the Vale District Office and are available for your review. The following information is also available on our web site at <http://www.or.blm.gov/vale/>:

- North Fork Malheur River Allotment Determinations
- North Fork Malheur River Allotment Field Data
- Map of Allotments within the North Fork Malheur River Geographical Mgmt. Area

A NEPA document will be prepared to analyze management actions needed to:

- make progress toward meeting Standards where they currently are not being met and;
- maintain or improve Standards where they are currently being met.

We are also interested in your views on the range of alternatives to be considered in the upcoming NEPA analysis and have outlined a range of alternatives as follows:

- **No Action** – Existing Situation – Implementation of the Southeastern Oregon Resource Management Plan (SEORMP) incorporating livestock grazing program decisions consistent with multiple use and sustained yield objectives. Resource values or sensitive habitats would receive management emphasis at current levels.
- **Proposed** – Provides for sustained yield of forage for livestock grazing while maintaining resource values for long term multiple use consistent with resource objectives. Constrains to commodity production would be implemented where Standards are not being met and to protect sensitive resources (i.e. riparian areas).
- **Suspension of Use** – In pastures not meeting Standards due to current livestock grazing, use would be suspended a minimum of 3 years or until monitoring shows resource conditions moving towards meeting Standards.
- **Enhance Natural Values** – Emphasis on natural values and the functioning of natural systems excluding some commodity production and public uses from areas with sensitive resource values. Provides for a sustained yield of forage for livestock at limited levels.
- **Alternatives Considered but not analyzed further-**
 - o No Grazing – Complete elimination of livestock - not consistent with federal law and the SEORMP.

The decisions that may be implemented from the NEPA analysis will be in accordance with and subject to the guiding land use plan – the SEORMP and Final EIS. We would appreciate your review and comments in writing addressed to the Malheur Field Manager, Vale District BLM at the address on the letterhead. To be considered, your comments must be received in this office by January 21, 2005.

Sincerely,

Tom Dabbs

Tom Dabbs
Field Office Manager
Malheur Resource Area